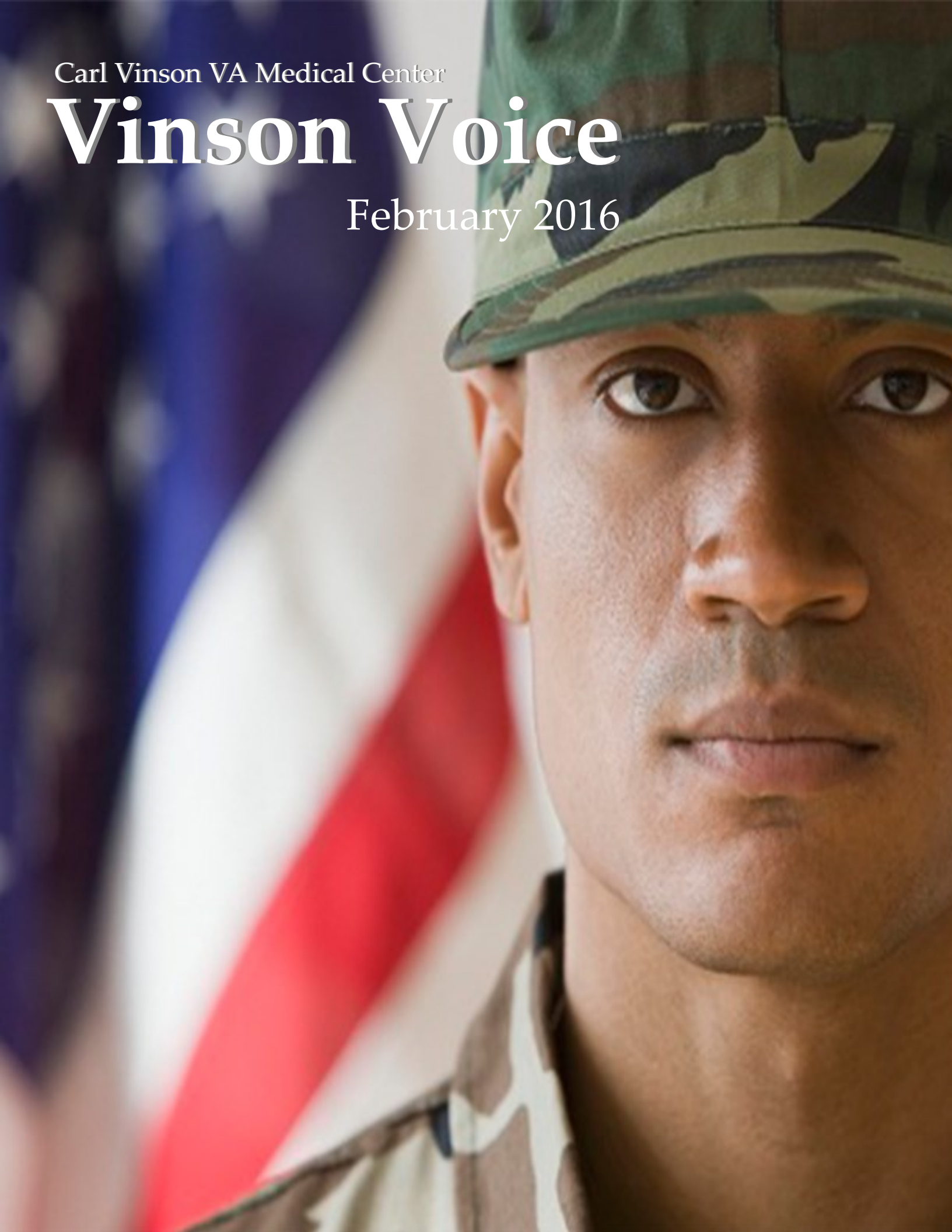


Carl Vinson VA Medical Center

Vinson Voice

February 2016



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Chaplain Gwendolyn (Dianne) Lewis, D. Min.

To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan . . .

President Abraham Lincoln, 2nd Inaugural Address

Mission . . . To improve the health status of Veterans . . .

Vision . . . To be the provider of choice for Veterans . . .



The Top 10 VA Services for Veterans in 2016

Happy New Year from the Veterans Health Administration!

Hans Petersen

Whether you are a Veteran, related to one or count a Veteran as a good friend, here are some valuable suggestions for New Year's Resolutions in 2016 for America's Veterans. We hope you put this at the top of your Favorites list, save it in the device of your choice or maybe just print it out and hang it on the fridge. It could come in handy many times in 2016.

1. [Sign Up For VA Health Benefits](#)

This is an easy guide to VA's comprehensive medical benefits package. It includes helpful instructions on how to apply.



2. [Drop by a Vet Center](#)

Did you know there are 300 Vet Centers across the U.S. and surrounding territories? They are for Veterans who have served in any combat zone and offer a broad range of counseling, outreach, and referral services.

3. [Learn About VA Mental Health Resources](#)

The Guide to VA Mental Health Services for Veterans and Families is intended for Veterans, Veteran family members, members of Veteran Service Organizations, or members of other groups interested in VA mental health care.

4. [Help a Homeless Vet Find a Home](#)

VA is committed to ending Veteran homelessness. No one who has served our country should ever go without a safe, stable place to call home.

5. [Watch Veterans Share Their PTSD Experiences](#)

Brave Veterans with PTSD tell their stories, hoping it will help other Vets — a compelling VA online resource.

6. [Discover The Many Ways VA Is Helping Women Veterans](#)

VA has made tremendous progress improving services for women by redesigning the delivery of comprehensive primary care for women and training VA providers in women's health.

if you
SEE
something
SAY
something™

Did you **SEE** something suspicious
around the building?

Then **SAY** something to the
Federal Protective Service to make it right.

Report suspicious activity.

Call **877-4FPS-411** (877-437-7411)



If You See Something Say Something™ used with permission
of the NY Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

7. [Enroll in the MyHealtheVet Online Program](#)

My HealtheVet is VA's online personal health record. It was designed for Veterans, active duty service members, their dependents and caregivers. My HealtheVet helps you partner with your health care team. It provides you opportunities and tools to make informed decisions and manage your health care.

8. [Stop Smoking and Binge Eating](#)

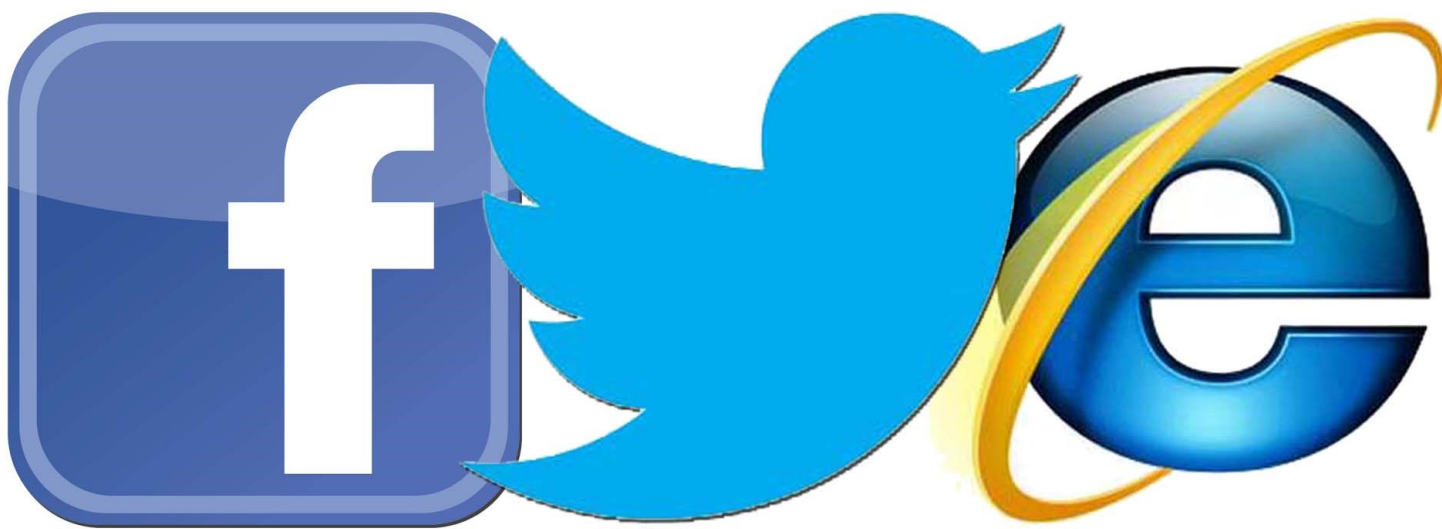
Here's help to quit smoking, lose weight, and a lot more to keep your healthy.

9. [Take Advantage of the Veterans Crisis Line](#)

The Veterans Crisis Line connects Veterans in crisis and their families and friends with qualified, caring VA responders through a confidential toll-free hotline, online chat, or text.

10. [Save These Links to VA Services](#)

This is a quick list of links to the many health support services available to Veterans. Have a happy, healthy 2016!•



Join us on Facebook, Twitter, and our Internet site!

CVVAMC to Get New Mental Health Clinic

The Carl Vinson VA Medical Center has started the process for constructing a free-standing mental health clinic on its campus.

Construction on the approximately 23,000 square foot facility, which is estimated to cost between \$ 5 and \$ 10 million, is currently in the pre-solicitation stage which lets prospective contractors know that bids will soon be accepted. According to the medical center's chief engineer Fred Williams, the VA hopes to see a contract awarded by March and construction begin in June or July. Completion of the project is expected within 18 months after ground is broken.

"We love to see new construction at our medical center because it represents enhanced services for our veterans," Williams said.

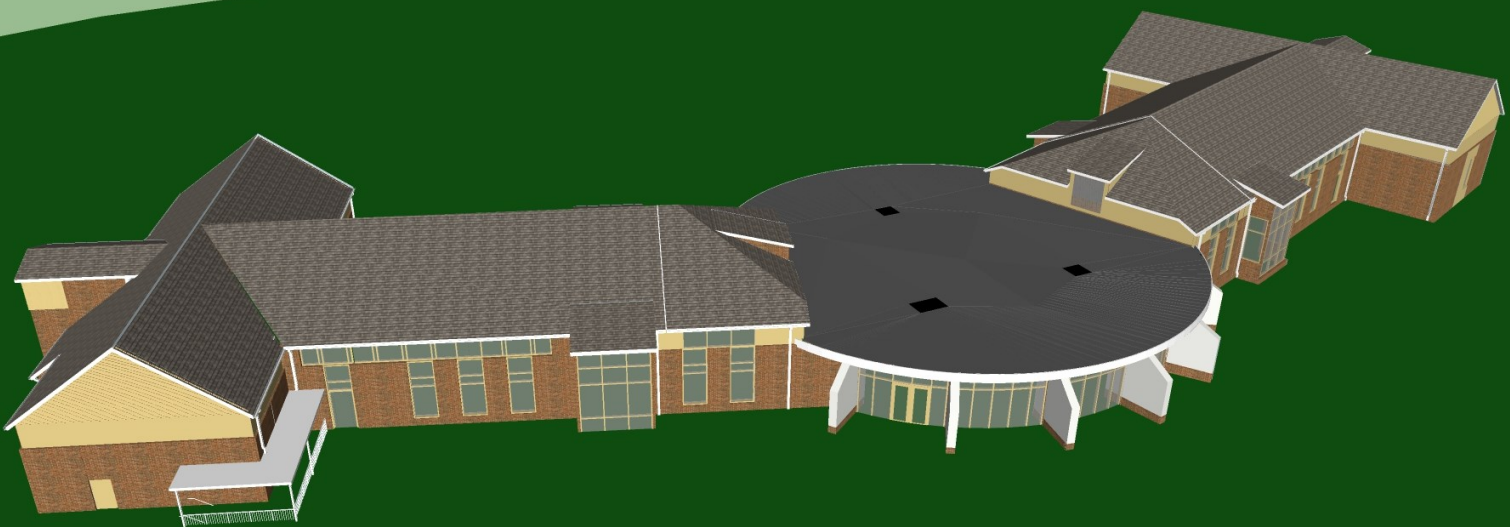
Mental Health director Dr. Matthew Geyer was enthusiastic about the new building.

"We're dedicated to providing the best possible mental health services to our veterans and this new building is going to help us do that. The building will enhance veterans' privacy and provide much needed room to accommodate the many innovative services that VA offers, and it stands as a symbol of our commitment to veterans' mental health needs. We can't wait to get it up and open so that we can continue to offer our veterans the best mental health care in central Georgia," Geyer said.

The new facility will be located on the front lawn of the Dublin VA campus near the Emergency Department and will include about 32 new parking spaces.

The Dublin VA covers 52 counties in middle and south Georgia and has seen a significant increase in the numbers of veterans requesting mental health services in recent years. Last year, the medical center saw over 10,000 veterans seeking mental health care at its main campus in Dublin and its satellite clinics, with over 5,000 of those seen at the Dublin location.

Medical center director Maryalice Morro emphasized the benefit to veterans that the new construction will offer by getting veterans and mental health providers together in a facility designed especially for veterans' mental health needs.





Stakeholders Town Hall Meeting!

March 9, 2016
10:30 AM

2nd Floor, Building 2
Auditorium

Everyone is welcome!

For more info contact
Dr. Frank Jordan at Frank.Jordan@va.gov
or 478-274-5440

“We look forward to a new state of the art facility that provides a full array of outpatient mental health services. The new building is designed to complement the campus and gives us a much better and inclusive footprint for the staff to deliver care,” Morro said. •



SAVOR THE FLAVOR OF EATING RIGHT

NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH® 2016

 Academy of Nutrition
and Dietetics
www.eatright.org

Touchton Bench Dedicated

Dr. Frank Jordan

The Carl Vinson VA Medical Center recently dedicated a bench on its front lawn in memory of the late Dr. Deborah Fountain Touchton, an inspirational fixture at the medical center for many years as she daily cared for her veteran husband, a resident at the VA.

Touchton, an educator in middle Georgia for 37 years, attended her husband James at the Dublin VA every day since he became a resident in 2011, devotedly assisting with his care while simultaneously inspiring VA staff and others with her dedication to him and other veterans. Touchton died unexpectedly in 2015.

According to Voluntary Service chief Dean Swan, Touchton helped to create a positive environment at the medical center that benefited everyone who came in contact with her.

“Dr. Touchton was a perfect example of VA working in partnership with its stakeholders to ensure the best outcomes for our veterans’ needs. What we couldn’t have predicted was the way she would touch each of us personally. Her smile, her wave, and her enthusiasm motivated our team to work even harder to give our best for America’s heroes,” Swan said.

The memorial plaque was provided through the joint effort of two veteran support organizations, Soldiers Angels, who have permanent representatives at the medical center, and American Legion Riders Post 17, represented at the ceremony by Rick Crumpton, who is also a Dublin VA employee. Speaking to those gathered to honor Touchton, Crumpton noted the personal influence that Touchton had on him.

“Seeing her sitting on this bench each day caring for Mr. James was such an inspiration and always spurred me on to work harder for veterans. I’ll never look at this spot without thinking of her and being encouraged to keep working hard,” he said.

Medical center director Maryalice Morro extended an open invitation to family and friends of Touchton to visit the medical center any time to sit on the bench and remember their loved one, and she encouraged the public at large to visit the medical center and see the Touchton Bench and the other memorials at the Dublin VA.

Speaking at the dedication ceremony, Morro underscored Touchton’s continuing status as an inspiration to those who support America’s military veterans, both at the Dublin VA and in the middle Georgia community.

“We are happy to dedicate this bench to Dr. Touchton, who touched so many of us over the years and truly exemplified service and honor to veterans,” Morro said.

Members of Touchton’s family, including her mother Annie Lou Fountain, were on hand for the dedication. Touchton’s son Jay thanked Soldiers Angels, the American Legion Riders Post 17, and the VA for keeping his mother’s memory alive.

“Due to the kindness of all of you, every time I pass by this bench and this place, not only will I reflect on the loving memories that I have for my mother and father, but it will also serve as a constant reminder that one of the most important lessons we could ever learn in life, is that serving, helping and giving unto others, will always be the greatest blessing of all. On behalf of my family, thank you all again for being a blessing to others. May God bless and keep you,” Touchton said. •





BLACK HISTORY MONTH



HALLOWED GROUNDS: Sites of African American Memories

**I won't spread flu
to my patients
or my family.**

Even healthy people
can get the flu, and
it can be serious.

Everyone 6 months
and older should
get a flu vaccine.
This means you.

This season, protect
yourself—and those
around you—by
getting a flu vaccine.

For more information, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>

CS254717A



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention



**Recognizing the
Generations of
Women in Service**

**I'm One.
I'm a Veteran.**



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

#womenVets



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in the 21st Century

www.womenshealth.va.gov



Soldiers Angels Makes Donation to Dublin Veterans

Greg Swars

Soldiers Angels, a veteran support organization, recently made a donation of coffee, popcorn, and hot chocolate worth \$ 20,000.00 to Veterans at the Carl Vinson VA Medical Center.

Bunny Smith, Soldiers Angels representative assigned to the Dublin VA, presented the donation to medical center director Maryalice Morro and Voluntary Service administrative officer Utaw Vines. Two pallets of Joe Mugs coffee, Armando Garza popcorn, and hot chocolate donated by Books-a-Million and Nestle will be distributed to middle Georgia area veterans receiving services through the Dublin VA.

Soldiers Angels and the Dublin VA officially started collaborating in 2015 to address the needs of middle Georgia Veterans. One of many Veterans service organizations that support the Carl Vinson VA's efforts to care for America's heroes, Soldiers' Angels is a non-profit agency that works within VA medical centers to provide support services to Veterans, including providing personal care items, lunches for homeless Veterans, and assisting Veterans with wish fulfillment. Soldiers' Angels supports veterans of all generations, an ideal contained in their motto of "May no soldier go unloved." Soldiers' Angels' staff and volunteers coordinate events and activities, organize corporate partner participation, visit patients, and approve volunteers to join the VA support pro-

Smith noted works to address Veterans that may

"Sometimes much on larger issues, like healthcare we don't appreciate that can make the better. People with homes may take corn and coffee or a ger cap or lap robe angel for granted, the little things in life veterans' wellbeing, ness to make their comfortable," Smith



gram.

that Soldiers Angels aspects of caring for get overlooked. we concentrate so issues affecting Veterans and benefits, that the smaller things quality of their lives good jobs and something like popcorn and crocheted hugs from an unknown but we think that are crucial for our so make it our business a little more said.

Soldiers Angels members serve as volunteers at the VA to assist with a variety of events and programs and have become familiar members of the Dublin VA team.

"The collaboration has been a huge boon to our efforts to serve our Veterans. For us, our Soldiers Angels folks have become valued members of our team," Vines said.

Morro expressed the gratitude of her medical center and the entire VA.

"I continue to be overwhelmed by the generosity of our Soldiers Angels organization and I know our Veterans are grateful for the coffee, hot chocolate, and popcorn that was so graciously donated," Morro said. Anyone interested in learning more about Soldiers Angels can email bsmith@soldiersangels.org or visit www.soldiersangels.org. For more information about making donations to veterans or volunteering at the VA, email Utaw.Vines@va.gov or call 478-272-1210 ext. 2729. •



Stakeholders Town Hall Meeting March 9

The Carl Vinson VA Medical Center will host a town hall meeting for veterans, their families, and other stakeholders on March 9 starting at 10:30 a.m. to get feedback on how the medical center can better meet veterans' needs.

According to Dublin VA communications director Dr. Frank G. Jordan Jr., the medical center holds town hall meetings for its stakeholders every quarter in order to ensure that they have a regular forum for making their opinions known.

"These meetings help us to gauge how well we are doing and where we can improve. Without question, getting feedback straight from our stakeholders is the best way to learn what we are doing well and how we can improve," Jordan said.

The town hall meeting is one of many VA holds around the country to provide local veterans an open forum for voicing their opinions and for VA officials to hear directly from beneficiaries as a step toward improvement and to maintain trust among veterans and VA. It also provides VA officials a chance to learn what stakeholders want to see improved as well as what is working well.

The Dublin VA town hall meeting will be hosted by medical center director Maryalice Morro and will include a number of VA staff who will answer questions veterans and other stakeholders have about programs and services. Tables will be set up with information on VA and medical center programs. The Carl Vinson VA Medical Center is one of 153 around the country whose focus is meeting the healthcare needs of veterans.

The town hall meeting will be in the medical center's auditorium on the second floor of Building 2. The meeting is open to all interested in veterans' needs and parking will be available.

For further information, please contact Dublin VA Communications and Stakeholder Relations chief Dr. Frank G. Jordan Jr. at 478-274-5440 or Frank.Jordan@va.gov.

BATAAN MEMORIAL DEATH MARCH



**APRIL 16, 2016
START TIME: 9 AM**

**LOCATION: CARL VINSON
VA MEDICAL CENTER, DUBLIN, GA**

•THIS 14 MILE WALK COMMEMORATES THE 74TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FORCED MARCH OF AMERICAN AND FILIPINO FORCES WHICH STARTED ON 9 APRIL, 1942.

•THERE IS NO CHARGE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WALK BUT PARTICIPANTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO SEEK SPONSORS AND DONATIONS.

•PRE-REGISTRATION IS HIGHLY ENCOURAGED.

•ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO TO SUPPORT VETERANS AT THE CARL VINSON VA MEDICAL CENTER (AS WELL AS OTHER LOCAL VETERANS GROUPS).

**NO
REGISTRATION
FEE**

MAIL
DUBLIN MARCH
PO BOX 16282
DUBLIN, GA 31040

EMAIL
DUBLINMARCH@GMAIL.COM

TELEPHONE
(478) 714-0927

FAX
(478) 353-8041

**EVENT T-SHIRT
ORDERS**

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G/VAM0-00AD-T11R

ONLINE DONATIONS
GOFUNDME.COM/WQGDPRZRG

FACEBOOK: WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/BATAAN-MEMORIAL-DEATH-MARCH-1125453734180275/?REF=HL

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SCAN THIS:



There are thousands of health information websites...



- Read about topics important to your health
- View videos and multimedia resources
- Make informed treatment decisions
- Manage your health on an ongoing basis

Click the image to access the VHL!

But only one designed for you.



Veterans Health Library

Your source for health information ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Visit www.veteranshealthlibrary.org



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in the 21st Century



The front of the Dublin VA recently got a face-lift! A crew assessed the cement façade of the main entrance to the medical center to make minor repairs and spruce up the 71-year-old building. The facility was originally a U.S. Navy hospital commissioned on Jan. 22nd, 1945, and was transferred to the VA in 1948.

VETERANS CHOICE PROGRAM



VA | U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

The Veterans Choice Program provides eligible Veterans the option to receive VA Community Care from approved providers in their communities.

Am I eligible?



Have you been told by your local VA medical facility that they can't schedule your appointment **within 30 days** of the clinically indicated date or if no such date can be determined, your preferred date?



Is your current residence **more than 40 miles** from the closest VA medical facility?



Do you need to travel by air, boat or ferry to the VA medical facility closest to your home?



Do you face an unusual or excessive burden in traveling to a VA medical facility based on the presence of a body of water or a geologic formation that cannot be crossed by road?

If you were enrolled in VA Health care on or before Aug 1, 2014 or you are eligible to enroll as a combat Veteran, and answered

"YES"

to any of the questions, you may be eligible!

How do I set up an appointment?

Call:
866-606-8198

1

Gather your information about any other health insurance coverage you may have (e.g., employer, union-based health plans)



2

Call 1-866-606-8198 to make sure you qualify + schedule an appointment. When you call, we will walk you through the following steps:

- You will be asked to enter your ZIP code, and first and last name.
- We will check to make sure you are eligible for this program.
- We will check which of your needs are covered by the VA.
- You will be asked for your address and the name of your preferred VA Community Care. Unfortunately, not all providers will be eligible to participate so if your preferred provider is not available, we will recommend other providers in your area.



3

We will then work with you to schedule an appointment.



This hotline is exclusively for making sure you are eligible for the Choice Program and setting up a VA Community Care appointment. If you have questions about other aspects of your VA medical care or want to learn more about enrolling in VA health services, please visit www.va.gov/health.



National Nutrition Month—Smart Swapping!

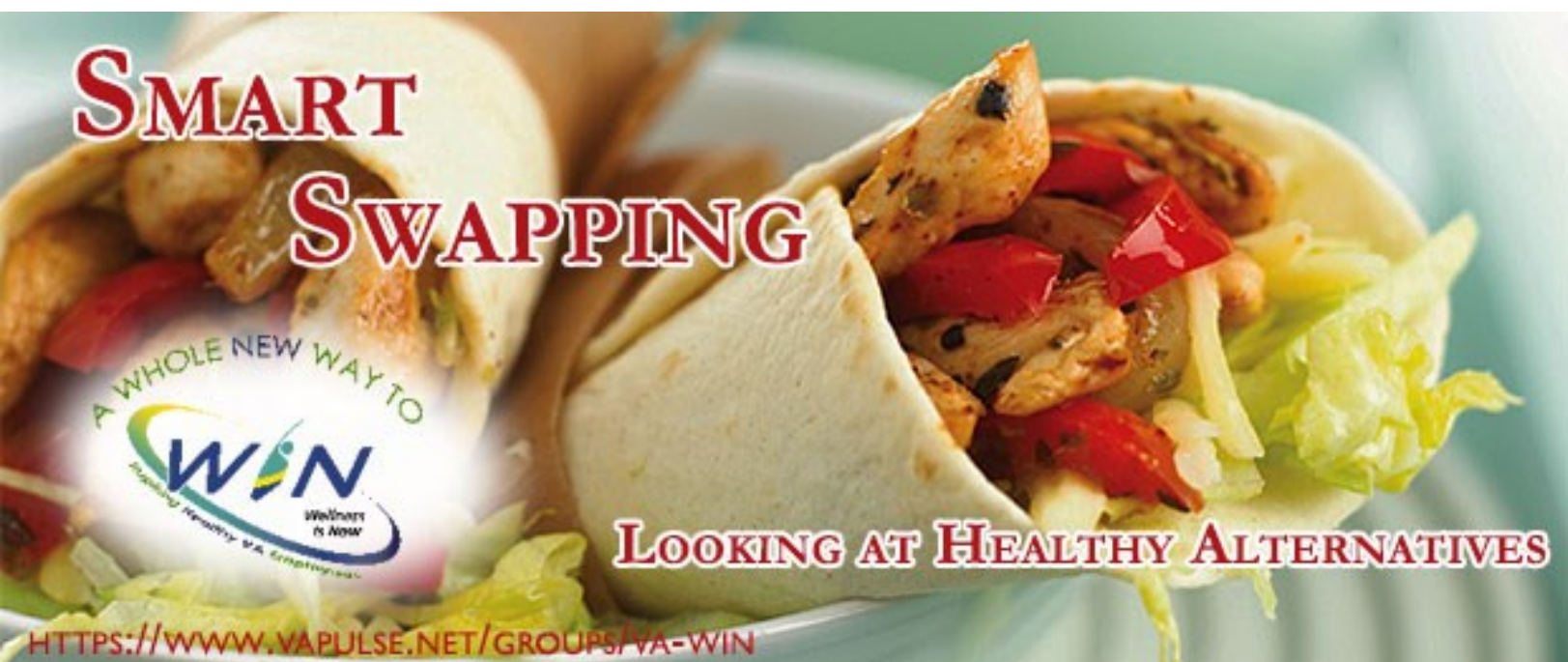
Adopting a healthier diet doesn't have to be as daunting as you think. Simply making small, consistent substitutions in what you eat and drink can yield noticeable improvements in your health. Incorporate healthy nutrition into your meals—while still eating what you love—with the following healthy alternatives.

Eat More, Weigh Less

It's a common misconception that you have to starve yourself to maintain a healthy diet and lose weight. But, you can still cut calories without feeling hungry. For example, foods with lots of fiber (like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains) or that have ample water (such as fruits, vegetables, clear soups and broths) are more filling and are usually lower in calories.

Fast Food at Home

Not having enough time to cook can sabotage your healthy eating goals, so keep meals simple when you're in a rush. Try having blueberries and peanut butter on whole-wheat toast for breakfast; a lettuce, chicken, and red bell pepper wrap for lunch; and green beans and carrots with a fillet of cod for dinner.



Those meals take about five to ten minutes to prepare and will be overall much tastier and better for you than most fast food options.

Avocado Appreciation

Replace the mayo on your sandwich or wrap with slices of ripe avocado. Avocados are loaded with vitamins and minerals, and while they're high in fat, it's the good kind of monounsaturated fat that can reduce levels of "bad" cholesterol.

Make Fruit Your Dessert

Desserts can offset an otherwise healthy meal plan. Try satisfying your sweet-tooth after meals with an assortment of fresh berries and sliced fruit instead of high-fat, high-calorie ice cream. Even sorbets or low-fat frozen yogurt can be better alternatives.

Remember Not to Kick Yourself Over a Slip Up Now and Then

Just be mindful of what you eat next time and take pride in any healthy modification you make to your meals, snacks, and drinks. Small changes are always better than making no changes at all. •



Blue Skies . . .

Food for Thought

Chaplain Gwendolyn (Dianne) Lewis, D. Min.

Often when you see the heading **FOOD FOR THOUGHT** a few words of encouragement, or support, follow. Yet, the very meaning of *food for thought* is something to be considered. On a daily basis our mind is filled with thoughts. Our thoughts vary in significance and origin. They can be pleasant or alarming. Pleasant thoughts bring us peace, joy, and hope. These we should savor, remember, and embrace.

On the other hand when our thoughts are alarming, or disarming we tend to become tense, stressed, depressed, and even lost in our thoughts. It is this sector of thoughts that needs to be fed because they affect our equilibrium. So, what do we feed our thoughts to get back in balance?

How about a good comedy? SOUL food works it's called *laughter*. It lightens the mind and relieves the soul. Laughter heals for real. What about thinking about the good times? Recollection of good times normally results in an *instantaneous smile*. A cheerful heart is good medicine (Proverbs 17:22a). Have you tried getting to a quiet place to meditate, or perhaps pray? Remember the old adage *silence is golden*. *Meditation* brings transformation (Romans 12:2b). The Apostle Paul so eloquently gives us food for thought, "Finally, my friends, keep your minds on whatever is true, pure, right, holy, friendly, and proper. Don't ever stop thinking about what is truly worthwhile and worthy of praise. (Phil. 4:8)•